

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 SAJ-01
IO-13 ACDA-10 /093 W
-----221955 002077 /40

P R 221922Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5812
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USBERLIN
USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS
AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMCONSUL STUTTGART

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 03204

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, GW, US
SUBJECT: WEST GERMAN REACTION TO STORIES OF CIA PAYOFFS
TO WILLY BRANDT

BEGIN SUMMARY: THE REPORTS OF CIA PAYMENTS TO WILLY
BRANDT HAVE RECEIVED SURPRISINGLY SLIGHT MEDIA ATTENTION
SO FAR, PARTLY DUE TO WEST GERMAN PREOCCUPATION WITH
THE PRE-LENTEN REVELRIES. BRANDT AND THE SPD HAVE HOTLY
DENIED THE STORIES, AND HAVE ANNOUNCED THAT BRANDT HAS
WRITTEN PRESIDENT CARTER ON THE SUBJECT. THE CSU HAS
TRIED TO MAKE POLITICAL CAPITAL, DRAWING AN ANALOGY TO
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THE LOCKHEED AFFAIR. THE FEW PRESS COMMENTS HAVE
GENERALLY CRITICIZED THE CHARGES AGAINST BRANDT AS UN-
FOUNDED AND IRRESPONSIBLE. END SUMMARY.

1. THE ALLEGATIONS OF CIA PAYOFFS TO SPD CHAIRMAN
WILLY BRANDT (AND OTHER WORLD LEADERS) HAVE SO FAR
ATTRACTED ONLY LIMITED ATTENTION IN THE WEST GERMAN

MEDIA. ONE REASON IS THAT THE STORIES BROKE ON A LONG WEEKEND WHICH WAS THE HIGHPOINT OF THE TRADITIONAL KARNEVAL (PRE-LENTEN) SEASON. DWELLING LARGELY ON ROSE MONDAY PARADES, THE GERMANS HAVE PAID LESS ATTENTION TO MOST OTHER EVENTS.

2. BOTH BRANDT AND THE SPD SPOKESMAN REACTED SHARPLY ON SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19, TO THE ALLEGATIONS. IN A PRESS INTERVIEW PUBLISHED THE NEXT DAY, BRANDT CALLED THE CHARGES A "LIE" AND ANNOUNCED THAT HE WOULD SEND A LETTER TO PRESIDENT CARTER ON FEBRUARY 21 WHICH WILL (A) PROTEST THE ALLEGATIONS AGAINST HIM AND (B) STRESS HIS EXPECTATION THAT THE USG WILL CLARIFY THE MATTER. (THE PRESS GENERALLY SURMISED THAT SPD BUSINESS MANAGER EGON BAHR, IN WASHINGTON ON OTHER BUSINESS, WILL DELIVER THIS LETTER.) THE SPD SPOKESMAN, LOTHAR SCHWARTZ, REJECTED THE STORY AS A "LIBELOUS INNUENDO" AND A "WARMED-UP BACKSTAIRS SCANDAL" THAT HAS POPPED UP IN THE PRESS BEFORE. HE ALSO SAID THAT BRANDT'S LETTER TO PRESIDENT CARTER WILL BE RELEASED TO THE PRESS AFTER DELIVERY.

3. OPPOSITION CSU SPOKESMAN KIEL ANNOUNCED IN MUNICH ON FEBRUARY 21 THAT THE CSU WILL DEMAND THAT THE FRG OBTAIN COPIES OF THE DOCUMENTS INVOLVED IN THE ALLEGED CIA PAYMENTS TO BRANDT, JUST AS IT HAD DONE IN THE EARLIER LOCKHEED AFFAIR. KIEL CLAIMED THAT THE DISPATCH OF BAHR TO WASHINGTON SUGGESTS THAT BRANDT IS SEEKING TO ENLIST THE HELP OF PRESIDENT CARTER IN ORDER TO SCOTCH A

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FULL REVIEW OF THE CHARGES AGAINST HIM.

4. THERE HAVE BEEN FEW EDITORIALS ON THIS SUBJECT.

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MOST HAVE CRITICIZED THE ALLEGATIONS AGAINST BRANDT
AND OTHERS (EXCEPT HUSSEIN) AS UNPROVEN AND IRRESPON-
SIBLE.

A. THE INDEPENDENT GENERAL-ANZEIGER OF BONN SHARPLY
REPROACHED THE WASHINGTON POST FOR RELEASING ITS
ALLEGATIONS DURING SECRETARY VANCE'S VISIT TO THE
MIDDLE EAST AND ON THE EVE OF BRANDT'S VISIT TO THE
US. THE PAPER SUPPORTED BRANDT'S DEMAND THAT PRESIDENT
CARTER CLEAR UP THE MATTER. NOTING THAT SINCE WATER-
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GATE AND LOCKHEED SEVERAL LARGE US PAPERS HAVE TAKEN
SCANDAL-MONGERING TO AN EXTREME, THE PAPER CONCLUDED
THAT THE STORIES OF CIA PAYMENTS HAVE DONE A DIS-
SERVICE TO THE USG, SO LONG AS THEY LACK IRREFUTABLE
PROOF.

B. THE INDEPENDENT SUEDEDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG OF MUNICH
TOOK A SIMILAR LINE. IT CALLED THE CHARGES AGAINST
BRANDT "LESS COMPLETE" THAN THOSE AGAINST HUSSEIN,
BECAUSE THEY HAD NOT TOLD THE AMOUNTS, PURPOSES, OR
DATES ON WHICH THESE ALLEGED PAYMENTS HAD BEEN MADE.

C. THE RIGHT-CENTER DIE WELT SAW NO ANALOGY BETWEEN

THE CHARGES OF CIA PAYMENTS AND THE EARLIER LOCKHEED AFFAIR. THE PAPER RECALLED THAT THE STRUGGLE AGAINST COMMUNISM HAD LONG DOMINATED USG FOREIGN POLICY AND THAT "WHAT TODAY APPEARS AS CORRUPTION WAS, AT THE TIME AND UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, THE PURSUIT OF AN HONORABLE POLITICAL GOAL."

D. THE INDEPENDENT STUTTGARTER ZEITUNG CRITICIZED JOURNALIST WOODWARD FOR FAILING TO APPLY RIGOROUS STANDARDS OF PROOF IN WRITING THE FOLLOW-UP STORY WHICH HAD IMPLICATED BRANDT AND OTHERS.
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To: STATE
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